Apart from these, in order to suggest a policy framework for the entertainment industry, both at the centre and the States, a Committee for Development of the Entertainment Sector has been set up. The Committee had given its first set of recommendations which, including a recommendation to fix a ceiling of 60% on entertainment tax, were circulated among the States and many State Governments have lowered their entertainment tax rates. An anti piracy training programme was also organized for police officers based on the recommendations of the Committee, which is expected to be the precursor of many such training programmes.

In its recent meeting the Committee has made recommendations, mainly relating to a further reduction in entertainment tax rates, appointment of a nodal officer in each State for assisting in anti piracy matters and facilitating a single point clearance by State Governments for foreign film crews shooting in India. The second set of recommendations of the Committee have also been persuasively circulated to State Governments.

In order to bring about a receptive investment regime in the entertainment sector, within India, a Committee has recently been setup to suggest a strategy to facilitate the flow of venture capital into the sector.

The Government had also constituted a Committee to make recommendations for Radio Broadcasting. The executive summary of this committee's report may be seen on the Ministry's website.

Tariff for cable channels

†591. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to fix tariff for cable channels;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether the task force has submitted its report to Government;

(d) if so, what are its recommendations; and

(e) the details of the development in cable T.V. industry that prompted Government to consider for bringing CAS in the country; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(f) whether it is in public interest and the criteria thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Government has, through the notification dated 7th May, 2003 (copy available in Ministry's website), specified Rs. 72/- (plus taxes) at the maximum amount which a cable operator in the four metros may demand from a subscriber for receiving the programmes transmitted in the basic service tier consisting of not less than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music.

(c) and (d) The Task Force, constituted in January, 2003 has made recommendations on the size, genre-wise mix of channels to be included and the cost of 'basic service tier' of 'Free-to-Air' channels.

(e) and (f) Since concerns had been expressed in various quarters about the arbitrary and unilateral hike in the monthly cable subscription charges, and it was felt that viewers shall have a choice of viewing channels, viewing of pay channels through an Addressable System was made mandatory in public interest. The main objectives of such a system were:—

* To save the consumers from arbitrary and exorbitant hikes in subscription rates;
* To enable the consumers to choose and pay for only those pay channel which they wish to watch.
* To bring in transparency in the figures of subscriber base and thereby improve revenue collections.

Setting up of Interim Broadcast Regulator

592. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the radio broadcast policy committee in its draft report has recommended setting up of an Interim Broadcast Regulator till the Convergence Commission is set up;

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereon; and

(c) the details of the recommendations made by the Committee?